

## VIII. SERVICE ARRAY

Rating of Review Team Regarding Substantial Conformity				
Rating	Not in Substantial Conformity		Substantial Conformity	
	1X	2	3	4

Missouri did not achieve substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array. Information on the items assessed for this factor during the CFSR is presented below.

**Item 35. The State has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment,**

**enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.**

\_\_\_\_ Strength      \_\_X\_\_ Area Needing Improvement

Item 35 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement because CFSR findings indicate that, although the State has an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families, the availability of services does not meet the demand and there are numerous gaps in services.

According to the Statewide Assessment, Missouri offers a broad range of services that support family preservation, reunification, and permanency (i.e., Family Reunion Services, Family Centered Services, and Intensive In-Home Services). There are also a number of non-traditional services offered, such as Newborn Crisis Assessments, the Family-to-Family Initiative (in St. Louis City only), Drug Courts (adult, juvenile, and family), and Early Childhood/Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Services.

The Statewide Assessment notes that services to promote permanency when reunification is not possible are available. Services to support kinship placements include subsidized guardianships/adoptions, case management, information and referral, temporary assistance, parent education, support groups, and supportive services. Older youth in out-of-home care receive independent living services and life-skills training. They also participate in the Missouri Mentoring Program, which features work-site mentoring opportunities.

As indicated in the Statewide Assessment, despite the existence of services, the availability does not meet the demand, resulting in waiting lists for many services. In addition, the fact that both the Intensive In-Home Services and Family Reunion Services have caps placed on caseloads precludes some families from receiving needed services.

Most stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed the opinion that there is a broad array of contracted and community-based services available to meet a range of needs. However, they noted that the demand for services does not keep pace with the supply. Stakeholders also voiced concern that budget cutbacks tend to result in fewer services provided to parents and children in intact families. Stakeholders noted that there is a chronic lack of funding for contracted service providers, but an increasing need for their services.

Stakeholders reported that in many cases, services are limited or interrupted by annual funding freezes. When this occurs, a provider's ability to make gains in counseling or treatment with a child or family is compromised.

Stakeholders identified the following service gaps in the State:

- Mental health services, including therapists and psychiatric services.
- Dentists who will accept Medicaid.
- Assortment of foster homes to accommodate siblings, older children, disabled children, and medically fragile children.
- Parenting classes, particularly for teen parents, and parent aides to work one-on-one with parents.
- In-patient and outpatient substance abuse services and aftercare.
- Post-adoption services such as tutoring, respite, day treatment, day care (these are no longer available due to budget cuts).
- Interpreter services for non-English speaking families.
- Transportation to assist in visitation and to access services.

**Item 36. The services in item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP.**

\_\_\_\_ Strength        X   Area Needing Improvement

Item 36 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement because the CFSR found that services are not accessible to families and children in all jurisdictions in the State, particularly in rural areas.

According to the Statewide Assessment, although some services are available statewide, such as the Independent Living program for youth and Intensive In-home services, there are key services geared toward crisis intervention and family reunification that are not consistently available to children and families on a statewide basis. For example, Family Reunion services are provided in only 11 sites across the state, including Kansas City and St. Louis County. Some Children's Treatment Services (CTS), which include counseling, use of parent aides, and psychological evaluations, are not always available in local communities and to non-Medicaid families. Furthermore, budget restrictions have affected the agency's ability to provide CTS services to all families in need.

Most stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed the opinion that necessary services are not accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions in the State. State-level stakeholders reported that rural areas and smaller communities are underserved, particularly concerning the availability of dental care, mental health services, and services to address special medical needs. They noted that families in rural areas must travel to metropolitan areas to access these services. Stakeholders also noted that although in-home services are available in communities throughout the State, there is limited access to Family Reunion services, due to limited resources.

Stakeholders also reported that there are extensive waiting lists to access services, particularly in Jasper County. State-level stakeholders noted that it is difficult to access mental health services for children who live in St. Louis City but are placed in foster care in St. Louis County.

**Item 37. The services in item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.**

☐ Strength      ☒ Area Needing Improvement

Item 37 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement because the CFSR findings indicate that services are not available to meet the individualized needs of children and families.

According to the Statewide Assessment, individualized service plans are developed by FSTs to meet the specific needs of all family members. Children’s Treatment Services (CTS) also provide flexible funding to meet individual needs of families in order to prevent removal from the home. However, CTS flexible funding is not always available.

Most stakeholders commenting on this issue during the onsite CFSR reported that family service plans tend to be “cookie cutter” and are not sufficiently individualized to meet family needs. In addition, stakeholders reported that services do not always correspond to the reason that the child entered care, resulting in “boilerplate service agreements.” Although some flexible funding is available, stakeholders noted that these funds are too limited to ensure individualization of services to children and families.